

**Oral History: Hollis Matthews and Wayne Wilcox<sup>1</sup>**  
**Eastport, Maine**  
**July 26, 2011**  
**Interviewer: Anna Henry**

**Hollis Matthews was born in 1925 and has lived most of his life in Eastport, Maine. He worked as a customs officer and retired in 1990. Wayne Wilcox was born in 1954. He was born and raised in Eastport, Maine.**

*Interviewer:* How have you been involved in the fisheries?

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh, we used to have thousands and thousands of pounds of fish come in every day here. We used to bring them in for canning, but we also had many more that came in and were transferred into fishmeal, pet foods, and –

*Wayne Wilcox:* --scales.

*Hollis Matthews:* Then, we had the scales off the fish that came in.

*Interviewer:* Oh, right, okay. Did you work in any of those factories?

*Hollis Matthews:* Before I went into customs, I did.

*Interviewer:* And how did you get started doing that?

*Hollis Matthews:* Needed a job. *[Laughs]* That's all.

*Interviewer:* Did you have any family members that were involved in the fishing business?

*Hollis Matthews:* My mother, my father, and my brother. I don't know. I think one of my sisters, Harriet, she worked there. And my Aunt Bea, my grandmother, my grandfather was a fisher. Oh, yeah, we all were. Everything around here, and Wayne will testify to this, is dependent on your herring industry. We did have a groundfish industry, but it wasn't a very big one. No groundfish now, but I guess no herring. Wayne will tell you the same thing, that we had a lot of herring.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Most of that was from the other side.

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*Hollis Matthews:* And most of it came over from Canada. It was very interesting. It was a living. It wasn't a good living. It wasn't anything you could go to Bermuda every once a year on, but it put something on the table.

*Interviewer:* Can you tell me a little about this community when you were growing up around here?

*Hollis Matthews:* Yeah, what do you want to know?

*Interviewer:* How was the overall economy at that time?

*Hollis Matthews:* [Laughs] I guess we both know about that. It wasn't good. It wasn't good. We had WPA. You ever heard about that?

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Hollis Matthews:* We had WPA. We had sardine factories. We had a lot of sardine factories. One of the good jobs was in the pearl factory; we used to call it 'The Pearl Factory'.

*Interviewer:* That was the scales?

*Hollis Matthews:* That was the scales. They used the essence of the herring. They did something with them. They made a lot of money – somebody did. They were one of the first ones and one of the only ones. The fishmeal and the scales paid overtime, but you could go to work for sardine factories from 7:00 AM to 12:00 AM and you get the same rate.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That's right.

*Hollis Matthews:* Straight pay. I never did understand how [xx] probably bought – well, yes, I did understand. Anyways.

*Interviewer:* Those were the most important sources of jobs in the community?

*Hollis Matthews:* Yeah. We had a lot of sardine factories here. What'd we have, about twelve, Wayne, at one time?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Around twenty-two at one time, around World War I.

*Hollis Matthews:* Twenty-two.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Then, it started to decline a bit.

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*Interviewer:* Okay. Were there other industries or businesses that were dependent on fishing?

*Hollis Matthews:* Well, we did have a groundfish business, like the Harry Ray Fish Market. They'd sell fresh fish. They would also load up fish peddlers that went up into Aroostook County where they had a good market for fresh fish. That was pollock, haddock, and flounder, things like that.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Skin shops. Smoked herring. Smoked sardines.

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh, yes. We had a big one. Sardines, smoked herring.

*Wayne Wilcox:* And American Cans made cans for them. American Can Plant.

*Hollis Matthews:* Up till 1930 or 1932, was it? 1933? No, it was later than that, wasn't it Wayne?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Down here? Yeah, then they closed up and they kept the one in Lubec going.

*Hollis Matthews:* They made a different type of a can, one that you pull on it. The other one had a –

*Interviewer:* Like a pull tab?

*Hollis Matthews:* – double edged --

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, American Can came over and started a business.

*Hollis Matthews:* And the railroad. There just wasn't any diversity of jobs around here. You took what you got. I remember, during the Depression, we built a nice big ball field up the road, tennis courts, picnic grounds. I don't know how they did it. Now, with this prosperity, they tore them down! *[Laughs]*

*Interviewer:* Really? Do you know why?

*Hollis Matthews:* I think I heard one fellow tore it down to burn wood to keep himself warm.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, that sounds about right.

*Hollis Matthews:* You've heard that?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh, yeah. The one on Quentin Road.

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*Hollis Matthews:* Then, also, one big thing – you don't read about it. We had the NYA. We had Quoddy Village. Wayne had a thing on that yesterday morning on our conference.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, my history conference.

*Hollis Matthews:* This village that you came by, with the big warehouses out there, that was a village that was put there by the US Engineers for the Quoddy Tidal Power Project. Ever heard of that?

*Interviewer:* Oh, yeah.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That's from Quoddy Dam, 1935-1936. Lasted one year.

*Hollis Matthews:* Then, after that, the NYA came in after that.

*Interviewer:* What's the NYA?

*Hollis Matthews:* National Youth Administration. They took these kids off the street, like in New York, Hartford, Boston, and Philadelphia, and brought them up here and taught them a trade. I don't know how many we had. Do you know the number, Wayne?

*Wayne Wilcox:* About eight hundred, with three dormitories out there. Oh, yeah.

*Hollis Matthews:* They utilized the houses.

*Wayne Wilcox:* One of the better successful Depression-era programs is what it was. Quoddy Boys, they called them. Girls starting coming, they became Quoddy Girls.

*Hollis Matthews:* 'WOWs': Women Ordinance Workers.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Then, the war came along.

*Hollis Matthews:* Then the war came along, and Wayne knows more about that than I do on the CV's world there. There was a training base, and Wayne can tell you about that. He was instrumental.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Saved a monument.

*Hollis Matthews:* That monument up there, to commemorate the thing. He knows quite a bit about that.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Quite a place, at one time.

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*Interviewer:* What was the waterfront like when you were growing up?

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh, that was beautiful. We had wharves. We had wharves the whole way down from Jack Holmes's.

*Wayne Wilcox:* From North End all the way down.

*Hollis Matthews:* North End.

*Wayne Wilcox:* South End.

*Hollis Matthews:* Houston School.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Hard to believe now when you look. It's gone. Real sad for us.

*Hollis Matthews:* You want to see some pictures of that?

*Interviewer:* Yeah, I'd love that.

*Hollis Matthews:* Should we show them to her?

*Wayne Wilcox:* She wants to see them. I know in the sitting room, they had a bunch of old ones from the 1950's and '60's. When I was growing up, they were pretty well deteriorated. I came in the tail end of things. It's like there were still a lot of remains of old houses, the old Customs House and stuff. I remember that. Holly remembers when there was actually activity on the things.

*Interviewer:* So what happened to them?

*Hollis Matthews:* I really don't know. I remember Wasser's was one of the first ones that went down. Number two, didn't that burn?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Most of them, they all seem to have fires.

*Hollis Matthews:* They all seem to have fires, because when the business went down —

*Wayne Wilcox:* --They all burned. Holly can tell you more about that, I'm sure. Then, the war came and they packed everything. They packed stuff that shouldn't have been packed in and kind of destroyed the business. After the war, it really started going down.

*Hollis Matthews:* Well, there was one big thing that really, I think, destroyed the sardine business. That was the raw pack.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, they switched over, had different techniques. They had the raw pack or the cold pack, like Holly's talking about. They switched over in the 1950's, I believe, and they went to packing raw fish. Before, they used to cook them on flakes then pack them that way.

*Hollis Matthews:* These flakes were like a screen with a one-inch mesh. Put the herring on, lay them out there. Cook them in the steam. Put them in the steam boxes. Then, they pack them. They were beautiful to eat right off the flake. Then, they started packing them raw.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, really took a number on the packers. It was cold, it is terrible. Arthritis, it's something else.

*Interviewer:* How has this community changed since you were growing up around here?

*Hollis Matthews:* Well, say what they want to, I think the community is better. I looked around town not too long ago, and there was a paving contract that came into town a couple weeks ago. My God, half the town got paved, including me.

*Wayne Wilcox:* The rich retirees.

*Hollis Matthews:* But it seems to me that probably twenty or twenty-five years ago, you couldn't do that here. It wasn't done.

*Interviewer:* And why is that?

*Hollis Matthews:* I don't know. There's no money, that's one big thing.

*Interviewer:* Do you know why that has changed in the last twenty-five years?

*Hollis Matthews:* Yeah, people get out of town. You got to remember, a lot of these houses that were being sold right now, you can quote me, were sold to retirees that are coming in and they consider these a real bargain. I'll give you an example. You remember the Levittown? It was right after World War II, in Long Island. They built a lot of houses. They built probably five thousand to ten thousand dollars a piece. Well, that was fifty or sixty years ago. Now, these people are selling their houses. They're not selling them for fifty thousand or sixty thousand dollars.

They're coming here, but it was only recently that the prices of these houses came up to the rest of the state. I believe that the

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prices are being held up because of the bay here. We're on the bay. I can notice the difference between here and Calais. They got a paper mill up there. Some of these houses, they sold for some good money. That's one reason. We do have something down here. We have a pier. It's being worked on right now. They're shipping cows out of here. They're shipping paper out of here. Pulp, rather. There are quite a few people working down there now.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Back when the sardine factories were going, I heard Guy Doherty say that a lot of jobs didn't pay anything. Now, you got hardly no jobs, but they pay more. Minimum wage job, back then in the fishing days, basically.

*Hollis Matthews:* They were minimum.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They were very minimum.

*Hollis Matthews:* I remember we had a couple of shoe factories here. They paid minimum. We had a wool mill. They paid wages, but I don't think the wool mill paid minimum.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They paid a little bit more, but just above starvation. I had to quit my mill job so I could get a job so I could eat. I've heard that from numerous people.

*Hollis Matthews:* [xx] two years of the wool mill or something like that. But anyway, 1952 or something, 1951 it started, and it went out four, five years ago.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Wasn't that long ago. King Cannon sold it. It was a job, basically, is all it was.

*Interviewer:* How has the economy changed?

*Hollis Matthews:* Why don't you answer that one?

*Wayne Wilcox:* From the time of the sardine factories and stuff? Like I said, in some respects, they had a lot of jobs, but no wages. Now, they got a few jobs but more wages. It changed in that sense of the word. It's more of a tourist based economy. This is Eastport itself, I think, the whole region has turned into a retirement type. That's what it seems to be gravitating towards. I was born in '53, so I can see it from the tail end. I can see things changing. World War II seems to be the big switch. Before World War II and after World War II was a big difference, really. John Greene and I talked about

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this more than once. After World War II, things seemed to have sped up, declined faster it seems. Strange, it's speeding up. It's turned more into a retirement community/tourist-based economy. Lubec – This whole region, both sides of the border are the same way. I noticed that when I was growing up. I can see the change.

*Hollis Matthews:* I can see it. I was away for a while, but I came back. Growing up, we had surplus commodities. You ever heard of that?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Government cheese.

*Hollis Matthews:* That old saying, "Did you get your butter?" But now, you don't hear anything like that. "God, I wouldn't eat that." Prunes. Dried peaches. *[Laughs]* Oh, God. You know what? The thing of it was, most of us were in the same boat. We didn't realize how poor we were, or that we were poor, because everybody else was the same way. Anyway, I'll tell you, I could live any place I want to live, but I prefer here. Christ, Wayne could go out there and make a million dollars a year if he wanted to write.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Been away, but I wasn't too impressed with it. I go visit. I'm happy. I come back.

*Hollis Matthews:* That's the same as me.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I like going away and I like coming back.

*Hollis Matthews:* Eastport is really nice. Have you been around Eastport?

*Interviewer:* I've wandered around quite a bit. I've been up here a few times, or rather down here.

*Hollis Matthews:* You go down to the wharves? See the new pier?

*Interviewer:* Mm-hmm.

*Hollis Matthews:* Have you seen what they're doing down there now? They took the mounting off there. Oh, Jesus, they got a beautiful thing. Did you want to see the pictures?

*Interviewer:* Uh, yeah. I'd love to see some photos.

*Hollis Matthews:* Before and after. Work, no work. Empty spaces.

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh, God, yeah.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Holly has quite a photographic collection. That's the Eastport School. We actually had an artist colony here.

*Hollis Matthews:* What was the name of that? **Lou Gundy?** No. **Selma Gundy.**

*Interviewer:* Where did you get all these photos?

*Hollis Matthews:* I stole most of them.

*[Laughter]*

*Hollis Matthews:* No, a lot of people gave them to me. See? We had a railroad here. We had a bridge here. That bridge was the other side of the cover picture. Right there. Did you ever hear the tale of an artist by the name of George Pierce Ennis? Landscape artist. He ran this art school down here.

*Wayne Wilcox:* From New York City.

*Hollis Matthews:* That's our distinguished visitor.

*Interviewer:* Do you have all of these on computer?

*Hollis Matthews:* Yes, yes, I've got. That's me. *[Laughs]*

*Interviewer:* Which one?

*Hollis Matthews:* The good looking one. With the Lee twins, in New York.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Wild days.

*Hollis Matthews:* There's some pictures of Quoddy Village right there.

*Wayne Wilcox:* When I was growing up here, I always thought worse comes to worst, I'd come back home, work in a sardine factory. I always thought there'd be a job. Sardine factories, I figured. Holmes's burned in '91, and I'm going, "I never thought I'd live long enough to see the last sardine factory in Eastport." Lubec had the last one. That closed up. There's no more sardine factories left anywhere. I never thought I'd ever live long enough to see the death of the sardine business. I grew up on the tail end of it. I still can't believe there's no sardine factories left at all, anywhere. They're just gone. It's like being a dinosaur. I was part of an extinct occupation now. I worked in a sardine factory. You got people who go like, "What? What the hell's a sardine factory?" It's just strange.

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*Hollis Matthews:* I think we got one in the area, and that's in Black's Harbor, isn't it?

*Wayne Wilcox:* That's on the Canadian side. As far as the US goes, they're as extinct as the dinosaurs. I never thought I'd ever live long enough to outlive that business.

*Interviewer:* A lot of the fishers had come from the Canadian side?

*Hollis Matthews:* Because they had more fishing, more area.

*Interviewer:* I've heard some people talk about tariffs and taxes being part of the reason.

*Hollis Matthews:* No.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It's part of – It's multiple –

*Interviewer:* But it was big here?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Change of the economy. Back when the sardine business was going, everybody seemed to eat sardines, especially down South and stuff. World War I came along. The economy changed. Tastes changed. People started buying overseas more. Norwegians started putting up a better pack than over here, because World War II came along, and the Depression. It all took its toll. As time moved on, the economy changed, and the tariffs and customs and everything else, it's a little bit of everything that killed it. Then, you've got Department of Environmental Protection.

*Hollis Matthews:* Ah, that was the one!

*Wayne Wilcox:* I used to work down Jimmy Warren's, here. At B.H. Wilson's Fisheries, 1971, 1972. It was a summer job. I graduated in '72. They closed in '75, and the reason they closed was because the Department of Environmental Protection in the state of Maine, they came down and said, "You can't dump any more stuff on the beach. Anything can't fall from the factory. You got to have stainless steel tanks for the fish." Holmes put all the stuff in and did that. It cost him an arm and a leg.

Jimmy Warren, who owned Wilson's Fisheries at the time – my mom was working down there – he said, "I'm not going to do it. I can't afford to do it. I'm closing it up." So, Jimmy Warren's B.H.

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Wilson's Fisheries closed up, left just Holmes' factory. They did everything DEP did, and it still wasn't enough. So, eventually, Holmes has sold out. The DEP really kind of put the final nail in the coffin, like they're doing to the lobster industry. The ropes and stuff. I understand about the whales and everything, but they're going to kill it.

They're starting off the same way they did with the sardine factories. The sardine factories are in decline anyway. Now, you're talking about minimum wage. The Sardine Council was very powerful, politically. It competed with the lobster industry. They had a lot of pull in Augusta, and Jimmy Warren was on the Sardine Council. They got the law passed – blueberries and sardines factories are exempt from overtime wages, don't have to pay overtime.

I worked twelve-hour days. I got \$1.65 an hour, straight pay. The only time I got paid overtime was I was working the ship room in 1971. They were putting up a government order, an Air Force order. I worked in the shipping room for one day. I worked overtime for loading up trailer trucks. I got overtime. That's the only time I ever got overtime in a sardine factory. After that, I went back to straight pay. So you're working twelve-hour, fifteen-hour, sixteen-hour days in a sardine factory and it's all straight pay. Before that, it used to be six days a week.

When I started working, it was only five days a week. The industry's changed from the 50's and 60's, where the packers worked 24/7, basically. When I grew up, I hardly ever saw my mother during packing season from April to October, because the sardine factories were so strong, you needed a job so bad, she'd work twelve or fifteen-hour days in the fishery, seven days a week. Fish come in, you go down, you pack them, they blow the whistle, the packers were down, the sailing crew and the shipping crew. So, I grew up never really seeing my mom during the season. Then, by the mid 60's, 1963 or 1964, the packers down – Jimmy Warren's down here.

My mom told me about that. She said, "We got fed up with them. We're not working anymore. We're going to work Mondays to Fridays. You don't like it. We're not coming down. We don't care. The fish rot down here." They refused. That's when they changed it. Said, "Okay, Monday to Fridays." And when they blow the whistle, fine, we'll come down and pack. My mom said more than once, Friday afternoons, they wanted to go home. They

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just push them down the mush shoot. They wasted a whole bunch. They said, "We're going home."

The factories, they were losing political influence. They were losing power. Holmes' over at Peacock's, they all started saying, "Okay, fine, we'll ease back a little bit and we'll cut back on the hours." But up until the mid 60's, they used to work – the sardine packers – terrible. They had no rights whatsoever. They got paid peas for it. The sardine factories were basically terrible places to work. "You don't want a job, we'll get somebody else to take your place." I remember those. I remember my mother and he remembers.

*Hollis Matthews:* I remember my mother down there one night.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It was miserable.

*Hollis Matthews:* Went down there, down to Warren's. The wind was on the south side. The wind was blowing into the wintertime.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They packed that year, all winter.

*Hollis Matthews:* The windows, some of those windows had blown out or broken. They didn't pay attention to them. "You sit there." I see my mother all bundled up. That was enough.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Then, in the offseason, when the tuna factories went up, often my mom packed tuna. During April, October, September was the sardine season.

*Hollis Matthews:* Did they pay overtime on the tuna?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Not that I know of. It was all straight pay. Anything doing with fish processing is all straight pay -- and blueberry. Until the war, that hadn't changed. Blueberry processing – no overtime, don't have to pay if they don't want them, they don't. And the Sardine Council's still strong. They changed the law in Augusta, labor laws – no overtime. But like I said, my mom worked in the offseason up at the tuna plant up there. She got laid off in October or whatever.

She made wreathes and stuff, back to work, and draw unemployment. So it was not glory days, but they paid the workers next to nothing. It wasn't a very good work environment. It really wasn't. But if it wasn't for the packers, sticking together saying, "We're not doing this no more. We're not working six,

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seven days a week. We're not coming in at 6:00 PM, 7:00 PM on Saturday night. We're not going to do it." They refused to. When they did bring them in, they used to push the fishery down the mush shoots. They said, "Okay, fine."

That's when they were losing power. Up until that point, my mom worked up at the plant up in Robertston. I remember going up there with my father on Saturday night, picking my mother up at 9:00 PM. She had to go right back to work Sunday again. It was not good times. You want a job, you work. If you didn't want to work, you didn't have a job. There's the door. That's their whole attitude – real Draconian.

*Hollis Matthews:* Yeah, you like that?

*Wayne Wilcox:* It wasn't that good.

*Hollis Matthews:* Told you he was good.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Like I said, I go in '71, and I worked in the ship room, then I worked up in the pack room. Like I said, I got just straight pay \$1.65 an hour. That was it, but we didn't work weekends. Even before that, this is when the conditions were getting better. This is better.

*[Laughter]*

*Wayne Wilcox:* I remember when my mom was working and my grandmother was working. My family came down from [xx] in 1929, at the Depression. They worked at the cotton mill. My grandfather, up in Milltown, and my grandmother worked up in a chocolate plant over in Milltown - Saint Stevens. There was no job in Kowls. They came to Eastport because there was jobs here. Sardine plant. They worked right steady all through the Depression, so they had work. They came to Eastport to work. A lot of people came to Eastport during the Depression because there was jobs here. That's why my people worked. Boy, I tell you, they work you to death. They would. It was not good times.

*Interviewer:* How has the role of fishing changed in the community?

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh, boy. There's nothing. I did see a couple mackerel being caught this morning.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, overfishing's really...

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*Hollis Matthews:* They did a number on them.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That didn't help the business much.

*Hollis Matthews:* Seems this friend of mine – in fact, he's my daughter-in-law's father – was with the fisheries business. He has his office next to me. He was telling me that the herring had disappeared over in Nova Scotia, and they needed herring for lobster bait. So they come up here in the middle of the winter, where the haddock were spawning up there in Saint Andrew's bay. They just swept the spawn.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They have big drift nets. They just wiped through everything.

*Hollis Matthews:* Took them back to Nova Scotia and used them for lobster bait. I haven't seen a haddock in here in twenty or twenty-five years, or a pollock.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They cleaned them out, yeah.

*Interviewer:* About when was that, that they were doing that?

*Hollis Matthews:* I have no idea. Must have been twenty or twenty-five years ago. We used to go to Johnson's Cove.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Pollock and flounder and stuff.

*Hollis Matthews:* Just as you come in town, over to your left, by the big curve, there's a big bay in there. There used to be a lot of haddock and pollock in there.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It's like the sardine factories in Campobello and Deer Isles – they're all gone. Even now, I can't believe it don't exist anymore. The herring basically evaporated and they slapped quotas on all the herring. There's nothing for a sardine factory anymore. Then they closed the one up in Winter Harbor. The quota wasn't enough so Bumblebee said, "We're going to close it up." We go like, "What?" It's not profitable anymore, and yet they still pack them, put them up over in Poland under the Bumblebee – I get a kick out of that.

And Black's Harbor in New Brunswick – they're still packing sardines and herring. But Bumblebee couldn't compete. They said, "We're going to just close the place up and still pack in [xx] under the Bumblebee name in Beach Cliff or put them up in Black's Harbor." And I'm going, "But we can't do that over

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here.” That’s interesting. I just get a kick out of that. But the herring quotas really killed the business. That really kind of put the nail in the coffin. It’s really, really sad commentary. It really is.

*Interviewer:* Was the community affected at all when the Hague Line was established?

*Hollis Matthews:* When the what?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh, off Nova Scotia? The herring quotas. Remember Maine, Nova Scotia – Georges Bank – they were fighting. I remember this bullcrap. The lobster wars in Machias, Seal Island-- All tied together. We’re still fighting over that. Yeah, it affected the herring business. It really did. By that time, the sardine business was dead, but you still had Peacock’s going a couple other places up in Bath and Stinson packing. It didn’t help. It really didn’t help. You hear the [xx] that was dragging for herrings, they used to rant and rave about it because that damn line, once that happened, we can’t fish over here cause the Canadians get all the choice fishing grounds and we got this narrow strip along the Maine Coast.

*Hollis Matthews:* Stinson come in there around that way. They came in there with the Pear trawls. Two big seiners dragging a trawl between them. I think Herb Hicks had one of them – The *Mary Anne*. He had the *Mary Anne*. That was one of them. I forget the other one. I remember coming to work in the morning, when I was with customs, and looking down there. There’d be twelve big seiners right full of herring. They were all going up to the Merrill Corporation, which made fishmeal.

*Wayne Wilcox:* And fertilizer.

*Hollis Matthews:* Or they go to the other place.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Cat food.

*Hollis Matthews:* Or animal food. What the hell? It was aquarium food. Every once in a while, Goldie Smith would come in with about fifty boxes for Holmes packing.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They’d buy the shipment.

*Hollis Matthews:* These boats held about a hundred thousand pounds. You’d get about ten or twelve of those in the morning. It’s all day, taking

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them out, then back to Nova Scotia, and then back. It was every day. There was a lot of people who worked on that, but as Wayne said, minimum wage.

*Wayne Wilcox:* The fishermen made a lot of money, but they paid a lot of money out, because upkeep of the boat and nets paying the crew and stuff. It's like a hundred dollars a box last time they were there. You got one hundred boxes in your boat, you made a good haul. But you paid out, because of upkeep of the boat and stuff. But yeah, regulations, overfishing. It changes economic times. Changing tastes. People didn't like sardines as much as they used to. Towards the end of it, they were putting up sardines and Louisiana hot sauce. It was interesting.

*Hollis Matthews:* I remember a lot of that. Sort of experimental.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It wasn't just one thing that killed it. It was a combination of things that really killed it. And the regulations really kind of really did them in.

*Hollis Matthews:* These are sardines. They come from Black's Harbor. These are real good sardines. You won't find anything from Yugoslavia or Saudi Arabia in my closet. But these are packed in olive oil and some how or another the IGA doesn't sell these anymore.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They don't?

*Hollis Matthews:* No.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Well, they – I know they –

*Hollis Matthews:* You can get them.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They still pack them.

*Hollis Matthews:* Really? Good. Because sometimes I'm going over to see Stevie and get a carton of these.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It's like kippers. Lubec put up kippers, good smoked fish. The bulldog in Lubec. The curry smokehouse over there? There was an outbreak of salmonella or something from smoked fish. Bought this fish from Canada, up the Great Lakes. The federal government came down – This is back in the early 90's.

They came down and said, "That was the last smokehouse in the US." They put up good smoked kippers. I used to buy them

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Bulldog brand they're good. Can't do it no more, because, again, regulation. Because the food poison, you got to do X, Y, Z. Well, their whole process is altogether different from what the Canadian was doing on the Great Lakes. Their fish was smoked and it was cooked. It was cured, but that didn't make no difference. So they closed it up, because they overregulated again.

They closed the last smokehouse up in the country. Their kippers are altogether different from what the problem was originally. But the government wouldn't listen to them. This is not what we're putting up. That's what they put up. We're two different things. Don't care. Again, goes back to overregulation. Overkill.

*Hollis Matthews:* But when you get people on your fisheries council with a United States fishery council doing all this – They're in Wisconsin.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Academia. Ivory tower.

*Hollis Matthews:* Or Iowa. Places. What the hell do they know?

*Wayne Wilcox:* They're not from down in the trenches. They haven't got a clue. They don't understand certain things. I understand where they're coming from, but they don't live in the real world. It's like Wilson. You got to do this because the state DEP says, "This is this in stainless tanks. You can't have anything fall in the water no more. Blah, blah, blah." Jimmy Warren and his whole family's work was in the packing business sardines for years. He says, "I can't. I'm not going to do it." He closed the place up.

Like I said, it wasn't one thing. It was a combination. Now, you want to go real left field on this stuff, okay. Fish waste fell in the water from the sardine plants, and looks like hell, but the fish liked it and brought a lot of fish in and when the tide came in you could catch anything you wanted off the sardine plant wharfs. But, they said, "Okay, you can't have fish products in the water. Okay. Fine. Pull them off. So, okay."

First thing I say is, "So what about lobster and bait tracks? They put rotten herring for bait and throw in the water. Isn't that polluting like the sardines?" I said, "This doesn't make any sense." Well, that's okay. It seems to me now they're complaining about the lobstermen, so I can see a repeat of the whole thing all over again. Now, it's a rope. Now, it's this. I'm waiting for, "Oh, you're putting rotting fish in the water, so you're polluting the environment, so you can't" I'm waiting for that. I'm waiting for that in lobstering so they can kill that.

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*Hollis Matthews:* Do you remember when the first time the DEP came down here? They came down to the Riviera.

*Wayne Wilcox:* In the '70s.

*Hollis Matthews:* They were packing shrimp. They had a nice, nice beautiful system there.

*Wayne Wilcox:* The Riviera packed everything when it was season.

*Hollis Matthews:* It was real good tuna. They had a machine that would take the shells off the shrimp, but they'd drop them overboard. Holy shit. Take them down. I don't know. Find them or not.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I'm sure they did.

*Hollis Matthews:* Boy oh boy, it was really something.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They'd throw fish food back in the water! It's like, "What?" Comes out, I don't understand what the problem is, but like I said, that's not going to solve anything. You want a reason why X, Y, Z business don't exist or why they're just fine, it's like the numerous things and you add them all up. That killed it. Maybe the change in taste and economic condition would have killed it eventually anyway, but I don't know. We'll never know.

It's just sad to see. I always grew up and thought there'd be a sardine factory and if I get desperate, at least I can get a job there. They don't exist anymore. Like the dodo bird, they're extinct. I'm the last of that generation. I'll be fifty-eight in September and I feel like a hundred years old. Like, "Oh, that's when they had horse and buggy days!" It's gone. I never thought I'd live long enough to see it completely gone.

*Interviewer:* Would you consider this place to be a fishing community today?

*Wayne Wilcox:* I wouldn't.

*Hollis Matthews:* No, not particularly, no. As far as the industry is concerned, no. I don't see there's anything in here, except we got a lobster. We got a lobster industry down below, Quoddy Bay lobster.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Salmon farming, and that's questionable at this point. If it wasn't for the salmon farming coming in, when the sardine business died, this port would have died thirty years ago, a lot worse off, no

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question about it. But they stepped right about the time when the sardine business was dying out. Lubec, the same way. That basically saved the area on both sides of the border.

*Interviewer:* What time was that?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh, god, the '70's?

*Hollis Matthews:* Yeah, that was in the '70's.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Late '70's. Started picking up, starting farming salmon here. If it weren't for that, both sides of the border would be a lot worse off than they are today. Seriously. Yeah, so in that sense of the word, maybe, but I don't consider it a fishing community no more.

*Interviewer:* Is aquaculture important to the community now?

*Hollis Matthews:* I don't know. Not to me, but to some people it is. We got any fish pens around? Yes, we do.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Not as much as we used to, because of the outbreaks of disease and stuff.

*Hollis Matthews:* They have them, they're seasonal.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They rotate them.

*Hollis Matthews:* Bring them out, clean out the bottom, and I guess they must be going back again, because several times they've been out to Broad Cove.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It's not as many people working in the industry as when it first started, like it used to. I knew a lot of people working there. It kind of shrunk a little bit because of the court case. It didn't have that Wild West mentality – everything goes, we'll do what – feed, chemicals. They put salmon pens everywhere. Once that kind of shrunk down to where it is today, a lot of people left when the jobs were cut way back.

It's a young person's job, because you're lifting, tugging, and pulling. It's very labor-intensive, but it's not as big as it was. It's kind of lost that bold attitude, laissez-faire type stuff. Now, they got to knock it back because there weren't really any regulations at the first of it. Now, it's kind of a little bit smaller. So it's not as rich as it used to be. Put it that way.

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*Hollis Matthews:* Somebody that first started in on these salmon pens, they got a section of the water. They leased this water. Then, they measured. There might have been a lawyer, there might have been a doctor. There might have been –

*Wayne Wilcox:* --A shrimp farmer from Mexico.

*Hollis Matthews:* They sold the lease and then sold the rights to put it –

*Wayne Wilcox:* --That's when it was totally unregulated. It was like the Wild West around here. Everyone was a salmon farmer. Jump in early, make the bucks, and get out.

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh yeah, but it's like anything else. If you had a little foresight, a little bit of money, you probably could have been really well off, instead of us. We have to go downtown, and see if I can find a can of sardines or something. It's not that bad. As far as I'm concerned, I think we're one heck of a lot better off now than we were fifty years ago.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, in that sense.

*Hollis Matthews:* No, maybe not fifty. Maybe seventy. Fifty years ago, we did have some stuff here. Started coming under the doldrums. After World War II started. I don't think we're too bad, economically, right now.

*Interviewer:* What kinds of jobs do most people have now?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Service related jobs, most of them.

*Hollis Matthews:* A check from the government comes every month.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Resource based like wood product, or pull up for the fishing business. We never were a farm type area, because the soil's so bad. Aroostook County's all potatoes. They got more diversified economy. Here, it's mostly wood products and marine industry type products. Now, it's getting more towards service-oriented, tourist-type economy.

*Hollis Matthews:* Yeah, you go downtown, practically every store is full now. I guess there might be a couple. This year, we got a new bakery, too. Was it two bakeries? Yeah, we got two bakeries and a restaurant came in. Of course, we got a couple secondhand shops, too.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, like I said, I think it's more service type jobs. It pays. You get benefits, that's even better.

*Interviewer:* What kinds of commercial fishing take place here now?

*Hollis Matthews:* Just the salmon pens.

*Wayne Wilcox:* You got the occasional lobster person. They do a little bit of lobster fishing. Not much, but there used to be handliners here. Rudy Wilson must be the last handliner. They'd been gone, now. Used to be the occasional handliner. Not much for fishing business anymore. The salmon stuff, really. Doesn't exist for all intents and purposes.

*Hollis Matthews:* Don't they do sea trout?

*Wayne Wilcox:* They're experimenting, but I haven't heard much about it.

*Hollis Matthews:* They were experimenting on trying to raise cod. I know a friend of mine on Deer Island was doing that.

*Interviewer:* Do you think fishermen in this port are doing better or worse than twenty years ago?

*Wayne Wilcox:* We don't really have any, anymore. The guys who go lobster fishing down here, they're doing quite well I guess. They own the Cobscook Bay seafood place down here. They're doing good. Was it Paul from Perry who wants to put in that lobster processing down in Princess Cove? Sea urchin type business, like anything else. What's in season, they fish for. Sea urchins ain't what they used to be, either.

*Interviewer:* Do you have any opinions on what is needed to improve the viability of commercial fishing around here?

*Hollis Matthews:* Not me.

*Wayne Wilcox:* No, I really couldn't say, to be honest with you.

*Hollis Matthews:* I'm not that familiar with fishing.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I'm sure the old standby, less regulation, I guess. Less of a hand in this, I suppose. Maybe that way, maybe.

*Interviewer:* How important is tourism around here? You kind of mentioned that.

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*Hollis Matthews:* Very.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Big. A lot bigger now than twenty-five years ago, much bigger.

*Hollis Matthews:* Yeah.

*Interviewer:* How do you feel about this?

*Hollis Matthews:* Tourism? I like it. It brings a different perspective to town. We sit around and growl about how things are. Are we going to eat tomorrow? No, it's not that bad. No, I really do. I really appreciate the tourists. A lot of them are nice people.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Most of them are nice people. Even people from away, nice people. I always like that. You're from away – what, is that an insult?

*[Laughter]*

*Wayne Wilcox:* I'm actually glad a lot of people from away are living here or moved here, because they add a lot more to the town. They bring more to it. That's good.

*Hollis Matthews:* Diversification.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Different ideas. They're trying to do something for the place. I think it's great.

*Hollis Matthews:* Once in a while, I come down there in Blue Iris. They ask for opinions. No, they don't. They venture opinions.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They really don't want to hear it, but they're going to hear it.

*Interviewer:* Should the town cater to the interests of tourists and people from away?

*Hollis Matthews:* Sure, as far as I'm concerned.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I have no problem with that.

*Hollis Matthews:* I have no problem at all with tourists. Back, last night, my brother and I went up the road to Basil's and had dinner, last night. The thing was ripe full of tourists up there. Now that's a nice industry. You got a nice place going, right on the water. People love it. They love it over there.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Just wish we could do something in wintertime. Aroostook County, you got snowmobile trails. It's a whole different world up there. Makes it more diversified. I wish there was something more we could do in wintertime here. It's such a drawback.

*Interviewer:* Who uses the dock space or the waterfront now, if fishing isn't that big?

*Hollis Matthews:* Well right now, yesterday, we just had a steamer in there, downtown. He's out there in the bay now. I guess there was something wrong with the boat, and they're working. We get a lot of ferries coming in. We got the new Lubec one that comes in. That is nice. I guess they're doing real well on that one. We got the sailboat, the big sailboat. That's a beautiful thing. It was loaded this afternoon, when I went out.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Can't forget the scallop business either. Most scallopers, they got the A frame and stuff, you know, the draggers. Well, when it's scallop season, they go out and do that. Urchin season. They don't go as much as they used to, but scallops are still a big thing here. So when scallops are in, that's why most of the boats down on the breakaway, most of them are scallop draggers waiting for the season to start.

Most of those guys are part-time fishermen. They're doing three, four hour jobs that they work down at the port. Not really full-time fishermen, more part-time with some carpentry, so they got two or three jobs. When scallop season comes in, they're open to do that between jobs. It's more of a part-time fishing business around here in that sense of the word. That's still here.

That's still viable, but depending on the number of scallops they can get. That's why most of the boats you see tied up down there just kind of sit there waiting for scallop season. Can't forget scallop season.

*Hollis Matthews:* Starts in November, doesn't it?

*Wayne Wilcox:* That seems to be the biggest thing around here now, besides salmon.

*Interviewer:* You mentioned this a little bit earlier – the housing prices – but how affordable would you say is the current housing situation here?

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*Hollis Matthews:* I don't know. I'm not going to speak personally. My brother and I, and I guess you, were talking about housing the other day. Some how or another, when we were growing up, we rented a house for ten dollars a month.

*Wayne Wilcox:* When I was growing up, you worked at the sardine factory or the wharf, you could afford to buy a house. What's his name? Arnie, talked about this. When he came here after World War II – He's from Norway, originally, so you work, you didn't make any money but at least you could afford to buy a house. As for now, you might have a job and it might pay a little more, but you couldn't afford to live here. I couldn't. I inherited my mother's house, if it wasn't for that, I couldn't afford to buy a house here.

I drive a school bus in Calais, it's twenty-seven miles away. I couldn't afford to live here. Not with the sewer bills and the taxes and the water bills. To people from around here, it's high. To people from like Levittown, Long Island, New Jersey – you sell a house for three to four hundred thousand dollars. You come up here and you buy something here for a hundred twenty-five thousand dollars. I couldn't afford that. I live here. That's an ongoing problem that's been happening the last forty years.

It's like people from when I was growing up couldn't afford to buy a house. Once they sell it, they move away, and they can't come back again because they can't afford to buy the houses because it's too expensive. That's an ongoing problem. The rent? I can't believe some of the rents they're getting around here. I could not believe it.

*Hollis Matthews:* Four hundred dollars a month.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That's cheap! I know a thousand dollars a month for rent away from here. I used to work and live in Boston. When I left there, it was eight hundred dollars a month. I'm going like, "How the hell?" Now, it's like fifteen hundred dollars a month. I'm like, "How can you?" So up here, we're talking rent, but if you got a job and it pays well enough, like down at the port, you can afford the rent.

But it's astronomical compared to what it was when I graduated in 1972. So yeah, the housing market is tight around here. We don't have enough affordable housing. Never did, really, until everything changed. But we do have a problem with rental and housing. We do. It's worse now than what it used to be.

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*Hollis Matthews:* We had a fire the other night up on Key Street. That apartment.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh was it?

*Hollis Matthews:* Couple of apartments burnt out. Now that's somebody with kids. Where are they going to –

*Wayne Wilcox:* --No jobs.

*Hollis Matthews:* Go out to Quoddy Village, might be able to buy one of those old houses that –

*Wayne Wilcox:* They ain't given them away now, Holly. It's like rat traps. God, the prices they want for these places.

*Hollis Matthews:* I had a house out there, when I was working in the shoe factory. I paid \$2,200 for it. It had two bedrooms, a bathroom, living room, and kitchen. It was on the waterfront.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Like Arnie said, you could afford to buy it, you didn't make much money, but the houses wasn't that expensive. You could do it.

*Hollis Matthews:* Now, you can't go out there and buy one of those. I wish I had, I could have afforded it at the time.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It's totally changed. Getting worse, actually.

*Interviewer:* What do you feel have been the most critical changes in the community that you've seen since you've lived here?

*Hollis Matthews:* Wayne just mentioned one – housing. The demise of the sardine industry.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Less jobs. The jobs that took their places are a fewer number.

*Hollis Matthews:* On the sardine industry, that involved quite a bit. That involved your sardines, your fish food and everything, smoked herring, the scales –

*Wayne Wilcox:* All of the fish was used. Even the mush. The lobster bait trucks, the mush trucks, lobster men use it. Every business uses it. Every business the fish was used.

*Hollis Matthews:* It was sort of devastating. I don't think we realized it, though.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* It's kind of like with the old saying, you put a frog in the water and turn the heat up and he don't notice until he's cooked.

*Hollis Matthews:* It was something like that.

*Wayne Wilcox:* You just don't realize it. Something's changed, but you can't quite put your finger on it, but you can sense things are evolving.

*Hollis Matthews:* Right down here, Princess Cove, they had a place. They had what they called the Salt Works. Wayne knows all about that one. They had, also, the mill. The shook mill. Then, the fertilizer. This was one big building. Various times, various things come in and various things went out. Last of it was a fishmeal plant. Today, two or three weeks ago, they tore it down. They're going to build something there. I don't know what.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They said it was some kind of a lobster pound or something. Sounded like a glorified fish market. That's all I can get out of it. He's going to buy fish from the local fishermen and hawk all that. What local fishermen? Sea urchins or a couple scallops? They do that in Lubec already, so why this?

*Hollis Matthews:* Right across from there was Lions'. Lions' used to pack sardines. They used to pack these big ones – quarter pounders. No, the big ones.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Quarter cans? Four or five to a can. Ma used to call those whales. Cut the tail off them.

*Hollis Matthews:* They're beautiful. He had a fertilizer plant. He used his own mush and fishmeal. Then, on the other side, years and years ago, there was Neil and Garnett. Frank found a trace of that the other day. I don't know what they'd pack down there, but it was all around here.

*Wayne Wilcox:* All related industries. Really was.

*Hollis Matthews:* Up the road, we had by the boat school, right around the corner there, was Nickel's.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Nickel's Wharf, yeah.

*Hollis Matthews:* They had a big sardine factory. They had places for the workers - green buildings.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They brought coal.

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*Hollis Matthews:* They'd bring coal in.

*Wayne Wilcox:* The sardine plants need steam. A lot of business for coal.

*Hollis Matthews:* And salt!

*Wayne Wilcox:* Salt ...a lot of salt. Yeah, Caribbean.

*Hollis Matthews:* From the Caribbean. And they had a big deepwater terminal.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That was back in the 1950's, wasn't it? In the 1950's, that closed up.

*Hollis Matthews:* Something like that.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Saw an aerial photograph. That was still going in 1950's. I couldn't believe it. Quite an industry out there.

*Hollis Matthews:* I think the factory burned down in the 1930's down there. Now we got the boat school, which didn't turn out. That turned out to be a fiasco. They were going to buy it for a big price and all big things. So anyway, we lost that, but we still got the boat school. *[Laughs]* I don't know what we're going to do with it.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Plant flowers. Gee what a nice ramp.

*[Laughter]*

*Hollis Matthews:* The governor built that ramp out there.

*Wayne Wilcox:* World War II.

*Hollis Matthews:* Also, the governor built the wharf, too.

*Wayne Wilcox:* You know what shucks are, right?

*Interviewer:* No.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They make small slash fruit for wooden boxes for the salt fish. So they play it, cut them, and cut it to size. You make the boxes right there. Shucks. A lot of people say, "What's shucks?"

*Hollis Matthews:* Used to put smoked herring on them.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Slash for the wooden boxes. Salt fish. Yeah. It's like a foreign language if you're not raised in it. It's like, "Oh, what's this?"

*Hollis Matthews:* You're right, Wayne.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Don't mean to talk. If you don't understand any of the words or the language, let us know. We'll let you in on it.

*Hollis Matthews:* Like young Collin says, we'll interpret it.

*Wayne Wilcox:* We'll interpret it, yes.

#### BREAK BETWEEN AUDIO 1 AND 2

*Interviewer:* What do you think this community will look like in ten years?

*Hollis Matthews:* That's a good question.

*Wayne Wilcox:* If the port pans out, and if the boat school thing got straightened out, hopefully it'd be looking a lot better. It'd be more tourists, less resource-oriented.

*Hollis Matthews:* I think we got a lot of potential here. I really do. But I don't know about leadership.

*Wayne Wilcox:* City council.

*Hollis Matthews:* That's a big thing, is leadership. I really don't know. I think there's a lot going on. If the port could be developed, it would be really something. You know, you got nice deep water there. The only thing is we got no transportation into Eastport.

*Wayne Wilcox:* They took the railroad out. They'll probably love that, the tracks out. They're talking about putting a port in here. "Oh, we're going to have a port there." But the tracks were all ripped up two years before. At the time this happened, I'm going like, "Why are we doing this?" I was living in Massachusetts at the time.

I was like, "This doesn't make any sense." They're talking about a port, but yet they're selling the track for scrap. They abandoned 16 miles of it. Then they get the port down here. I'm going, "That doesn't make any sense." So now they want the railroad back here. I don't understand the leadership. I really don't.

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*Hollis Matthews:* There's a lot of stuff, I believe. This is only my opinion. I believe there's a lot of stuff that's getting in with the council and the powers that be there that don't disseminate this information to the public. The public has a right to know what is going on here. Nevermind. I don't like to get into personalities. I do like to get into personalities, but not for –

*Wayne Wilcox:* Two hundred years from now.

*Hollis Matthews:* Turn that off and I'll talk about it. No way I'll go on the record and tell you. I do know there was a letter written by Mr. Marlow to the city manager.

*Wayne Wilcox:* The boat school, yeah. The recent development--

*Hollis Matthews:* --Concerning the boat school and it came to almost four pages. It's never been disseminated to the public.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Hopefully it will. But down the road, Eastport, I can see it's going to be more of a tourist base, more than it ever has been or will. It's just gravitating that way. It's going to be more retirement community. That's happened already. It's going to be less people born and raised here. Won't be able to afford to live here. The retirement I had came close to, I couldn't afford to live here anymore. It's getting too expensive.

*Hollis Matthews:* We've got people here that have made a decent living.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yes, they have.

*Hollis Matthews:* I'll give you one. Dean Pike.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Dean Pike's done real good.

*Hollis Matthews:* He's got the boat yard.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Boat school instructor.

*Hollis Matthews:* Did it himself.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Lot of work.

*Hollis Matthews:* Did it himself. He's a smart boy. The other one there – Jim Blankman. Very smart. They can do about anything. Thing of it is, Dean's got a nice boat yard, but he doesn't need too many

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people to run it, because it's a lot of boat storage. And Jim, how many people can work on making a violin?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Good woodwork, though.

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh, boy, he's a good woodworker. Nice people work hard and take a chance. Like Dean. Cripes, he bought halfway up Solomon Street. He put his buildings in there. He does a good job. I kind of think we got no place to go except up. I think we probably will go up. We get some more people in town with some ideas.

*Wayne Wilcox:* People from away. They got some good ideas. I think it's great. I really do.

*Hollis Matthews:* You asked that question. I agree with him, 100%. He's a hell of a lot younger than I am.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Well, thank you. Much younger.

*Interviewer:* What would you like this community to look like in the future?

*Hollis Matthews:* I don't know. I'm not that smart to look into the future, but I would like to see everybody have a nice home and a nice job. A decent job is what people need, and not like running sardine food. Sardine factories are good if you wanted to buy packs of cigarettes. Oh, you couldn't buy a pack of cigarettes now.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Or gas.

*Hollis Matthews:* Or gas!

*Wayne Wilcox:* We could use a gas station or a grocery store. That'd be nice. Yeah, let's have two gas stations here, like they used to. Pharmacy would be nice.

*Hollis Matthews:* We had two A&P's in this town.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh yeah, it's unbelievable.

*Hollis Matthews:* Two! One upper and one lower. We had a liquor store.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Just unbelievable what's come and gone in the last 50 years. Every neighborhood had a grocery store.

*Hollis Matthews:* Practically every little grocery store. They had a gas tank. Henry Maller with Aaron Broadway – Did you know they sold Gulf gas

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out there? Dan Kelly sold Tidal down there. Jimmy Spinnies?  
That was a long time ago.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Population right now is about 1,300, about what it was during the War of 1812 when the British occupied us. Hopefully it will stabilize and go up. In the summertimes, it goes up a little bit, because of the summer people. It would be nice to have a little more of an economic base, more of a grocery store, more stores.

*Hollis Matthews:* Competition.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Gas station or two would be nice. It would. I go down the coast, and I see places smaller than Eastport – they got a couple gas stations, a couple – They got more of a tourist business. We're about a hundred miles from Bar Harbor, and it's like two different worlds. Wow, a hundred miles out. Drive by little communities on the coast. Up here, it's kind of like we're an appendage. It doesn't make any sense. We're not that far off the beaten path, but that's the way it is right now. I'm hoping in the future it will come into its own again.

*Hollis Matthews:* I remember we had three drug stores in town. We got to go to Calais now for prescriptions. Three. Hollis Hew, Hutchinson's, and Havey Wilson's. We don't have any now. Havey Wilson's is falling down. Hutchinson's got a hardware store in there. Hollis Hew's is closed up. I don't know what you got to do to support it, but we took a lot of support for town for people like that out of Perry and Pembroke and Dennysville. But apparently, it wasn't enough. They all closed down.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Plus, we used to get a lot of people from the Canadian side. The fishing business. The sardine business. They used to come over and shop here all the time. Campobello, Grand Manan, always boats being tied up, buying, selling, stuff. We lost all the sardine business on both sides of the border. That just dried up and went away. We lost all that extra trade. When they put the bridge in, from Lubec into Campobello, back in '64, we lost most of the Canadian fishermen, because now they took their cars off the Island and shopped in Lubec. It's kind of interesting, because it kind of hurt Eastport a little bit. So it's kind of like that.

*Hollis Matthews:* I'm looking for those pictures of high tide and low tide. They were beautiful. A bridge of boats, between two wharfs, small boats coming over from Campobello.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Lubec, in some ways, is a lot worse off than Eastport. In some ways, it's better, because they're on the mainland. They got that mainland connection. If we succeed, they succeed.

*Hollis Matthews:* There's the picture of our waterfront there, probably twenty-five years ago, or thirty years ago.

*Interviewer:* That's great.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Lubec – they're prosperous. They're just like Eastport. They've suffered just as bad. Both sides of the border. When I talk Eastport, I'm talking the whole area. You can't exclude the Canadians or Lubec. We're all tied together one way or the other.

*Hollis Matthews:* I don't remember where those things are. I'd like to show you that picture.

*Interviewer:* These are great photos.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Holly's been collecting them for quite a while.

*Hollis Matthews:* That's how we used to go to Eastport. We used to have to jump.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Toll bridge.

*Hollis Matthews:* When'd that go? 1918, Wayne?

*Wayne Wilcox:* The toll bridge? It went out a couple times. They didn't have to do any maintenance on it properly. Ice floe took care of some of it. That's why they built the causeway.

*Hollis Matthews:* There's your old railroad track into Eastport. I'm sorry. I can't find that.

*Interviewer:* What do you like most about living here?

*Hollis Matthews:* I like it. I just like it here. I know everybody. I know who I can trust, that's one big thing. There was Quoddy Village right there. These are all Quoddy. This Quoddy – That was quite a thing. The buildings, they were nice new buildings. The apartments for the workers were beautiful. We really had something. Now, in 1936, Roosevelt ran against Alf Landon for president.

The first time we ever enjoyed any prosperity around here. Everybody was good. Two sessions of school. I'd go in the morning, and then another session would go in the afternoon. All

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right. Everything was good. I can hear my father saying now. He looked at the Browns bulletin board. He said, "Three hundred and nineteen SOB's voted for Landon." *[Laughs]*

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh, he was mad. He loved Roosevelt. He said, "I couldn't shave and look myself in the mirror in the morning if I ever voted Republican." Of course, I'm a Republican *[Laughs]* but that's alright. I don't know where the pictures are, but I like showing them to you. You know we had a fire here, too? We had a beautiful fire. It was 1886. Oh, by the way, that's 1888 that they were talking about yesterday morning.

*Wayne Wilcox:* On the water sand pipe? Yeah, that's when they erected it. They've taken it down now, thank god. It was in pretty bad condition, getting rusted.

*Interviewer:* Are there any other issues that we haven't talked about that you feel are important?

*Hollis Matthews:* Yeah, we had the Groundhog Gale. Now that was really something.

*Interviewer:* When was that?

*Hollis Matthews:* I don't know. Wayne? He knows the date of everything.

*Wayne Wilcox:* December 6<sup>th</sup>.

*Hollis Matthews:* Now this is the only picture that I can ever find is Coney Park, when they had the park over there by where the boat school is.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It was much bigger than that.

*Hollis Matthews:* It was big.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Tennis courts, baseball diamond, swings, fireplaces.

*Hollis Matthews:* Everything.

*Hollis Matthews:* This is another picture. That came through here like a big gale, blew the hell right out of the waterfront. I guess I can't find it. But anyway.

*Interviewer:* That's all right.

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*Wayne Wilcox:*

It would be nice to get the railroad tracks established somewhere in the vicinity. Maybe not for the port development, maybe not for East Port, but somewhere still use the line up to Calais. It's interesting. Back in 1898, when they put the line railroad to Washington County, they hadn't completed the part from Machias over towards Perry yet, but they had completed the part from Eastport up to Calais, which they still have in existence. They haven't tore it up yet. Still got that from Ayer's junction up.

The first five loads of sardines they shipped out were five railroad cars. They shipped up to Calais, over to the Canadian border, and Southern New Brunswick railroad that way through Calais. That's the connection we got now, because if they revitalize that section for the port, they plan to ship out the same way. That ain't nothing different than what they did in 1898. They took out the big section between Calais and Ayer's junction and Ellsworth, they removed that whole section, turned it into an ATV trail.

I'm saying we'll keep the part over here, that's fine, that's what we had before. So if they could revitalize that, it would be nice if they could do something like that in the future. At least they could get that track built up and maybe have some type of yard in Perry where they can unload the trucks and load them back up and ship them that way. I don't ever expect to see the railroad back into Eastport, south down to the pier, but it would be nice to see them revitalize that section of track. That's what I would like to see. That would help the port out, which would help the area out. That's what I believe.

*Interviewer:*

I'm kind of at the end of my questions. Do you want me to go through them all again for you?

*Wayne Wilcox:*

No, I think basically what I add is the hauling stuff. I worked three years on the Jimmy Warren side, some school in the summer time, basically. My mom, she worked all her life. She quit school to go make big money in the sardine factories. My grandma thought, "No, you can't do that." But it was the Depression, and what are you going to do? My mom said, "I made the biggest mistake of my life; I should have stayed in school." But, that's where the money was.

*Hollis Matthews:*

Those are those boats I was telling you about. All Canadian. They came over from Campobello and Deer Island Saturday – used to do the shopping. That was before they built the bridge to Lubec.

*Wayne Wilcox:*

That helped kill everything, right?

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*Hollis Matthews:* Lubec says, "Oh, we're going to prosper." You know what they did? Zoop right through at sixty right to St. John.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It wasn't that long ago they got lights in Campobello. This is before the bridge. As a kid, I used to look over and see the occasional light, cause someone had a generator over there. They had a ferry from Lubec to Campobello. Very few people had cars over there. This is back in the early 60's when they had electric light cables under one cable over to Campobello. It was lit up. It used to be completely dark over there. I remember that.

*Hollis Matthews:* That's some of the waterfront.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That's about 1930-ish.

*Hollis Matthews:* 1938. That's 1880. I don't believe that was 1880, though. I just put it on there.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That's the same map, I think.

*Interviewer:* Didn't change much.

[Laughter]

*Hollis Matthews:* We used to get big ships in here. Is this the *Mississippi*? Yeah, that's the *Mississippi*.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Fourth of July, yeah.

*Hollis Matthews:* That's summer downtown. That's the customs house right there. This is all torn down. All that. There's a lot of this.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Is that the old customs house on Water Street?

*Hollis Matthews:* No, that's the post office.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I remember there used to be down by the [xx].

*Hollis Matthews:* Yeah, down that way.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Used to be the old customs house down there. Three stories.

*Hollis Matthews:* You're talking about how Eastport's changed. Well here, just look down where the breakwater is. Coast Guard station.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* It was all factories, like wall-to-wall factories. You could go from one wharf to the other without touching the road, just crossing the wharfs. The wharfs were all connected. That's when he was a kid. When I grew up they had all fallen down.

*Hollis Matthews:* That's [xx]! *[laughs]* You [xx] than that.

*Wayne Wilcox:* The ice cream farm, which is being taken out and sold.

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh, gee, that's bad. They're selling it. They sold all the stuff in that. The lady came down, Jim was telling me yesterday. Came down and she appraised everything. This ice cream fountain, in the walls, there was an old drug store. And I understand there was also another fountain upstairs.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I wouldn't be surprised. It's old-fashioned. We had a fire in '86 and had to rebuild everything in '87, so the building itself was built and they put an ice cream fountain in Havey Wilson's drug store. Before that, there was another drug store there, and they had an ice cream fountain in there. Marble. Like you said, it was put in there around 1895, so it's one of the early, first, ice cream fountains. It's been there since then. It's been up for sale for a number of years. So finally, they get rid of it. This happens everywhere. Old places, people buy them, they strip it, sell the antiques out and they sell the building. Same things happened with this old ice cream parlor, mint condition but it's gone.

*Hollis Matthews:* That big mirror. The mirror there, ten feet wide and probably six feet high. It's all encased. Oh, gee. I couldn't believe that they're going to take that out of there.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It's too bad. It's just the way it is. Happens everywhere.

*Hollis Matthews:* Well, you know, I understand it was one of the churches that owned that. Charlie Wilson didn't own that drugstore. I understood it belonged to one of the churches.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I know Shed had it before that.

*Hollis Matthews:* Shed had it.

*Wayne Wilcox:* He's a farmer, so he was –

*Hollis Matthews:* High school was –

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*Wayne Wilcox:* That's who put the ice cream fountain in there. Like in the 1890's. Lubec's in the same boat. Same things happened over there. Yeah. Unfortunately, so things are changing. Some things are good and some things aren't good. It's the same way where you're from. Same thing happens out there.

*Hollis Matthews:* I got to show her this one here. All right. Now that's where Overlook Park is right now. Right there. That was a theater. Then, there was commercial buildings way down on the wharf. That was there. This was where you eat outside the bakery. That was knocked down. These are your boats at high water. I got another one here on low water. There is one postcard, and I saw it years ago, it's called the Bridge of Boats. Did you ever see that? I can't find it.

*Interviewer:* Well, these are great photos.

*Hollis Matthews:* Old. I got strung up in my days. I made copies of them and Wayne's got some of the copies of these, because I got a lot of this stuff from Wayne.

*Interviewer:* Would it be possible to e-mail some of them?

*Hollis Matthews:* Which one do you want?

*Interviewer:* I don't know. Pick your top ten or something.

*Hollis Matthews:* Concerning what?

*Interviewer:* I like a lot of the ones that show the wharfs and how developed the waterfront was back then.

*Wayne Wilcox:* The wharfs [xx]. That would be nice. Bob Peacock, he owns a sardine factory. Have you talked to Bob Peacock?

*Interviewer:* No, but I'm planning to.

*Wayne Wilcox:* You should, because his family is this involved up to the eyeballs with the sardine business. I was up visiting him one time, talking to his wife Jeanie about CBs and stuff. He showed me all these photographs. I'm going, "Gee, Bob, you should publish this stuff. This is Sardine Council, Jimmy Warren." He's related to all these people. The Peacocks. I mean, my gosh.

*Hollis Matthews:* Jimmy's father used to be the man.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* I said, "Bob, this stuff's fantastic. This is ancient history. Nobody knows about it." He's talking about this and that. I know what he's talking about. I go, "Gee, you should put that in a book or something." Because the photographs he had, I'm going, "Gee, this is neat."

He's looking at it from the owner's point of view. I'm looking at it from the worker's point of view. I didn't know this much about the owners. I knew both the McCurdy's and the Peacocks and all that, but like I said, my father worked for American Can for fifty years. It's just amazing what Bob has and what he knows. He went to a lot of stuff when he was a kid. I just knew this stuff because I knew from growing up, but he's talking about the Sardine Council, the waters. Talk to Bob. Yeah.

*Interviewer:* Is there anybody else you'd recommend that I speak to?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Hugh French, you want to talk to. Hugh'd be the one who'd give you the nitty-gritty of the situation. I don't know how all the physical aspects of it, the plants and the numbers. He'd know the details like that. He'd be perfect. Bob can give you all the background, the family connections and stuff. It's just amazing how it is like that, relatives and stuff. It's fascinating. Like I said, American Can got their start with the Seacoast Canning Company. That's how American Can developed, from that and the monopoly they had.

*Hollis Matthews:* They did?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh, yeah. Big time. Seacoast Can and the can plant. That's the birds-eye-view. This is before the big fire.

*Hollis Matthews:* A lot of this from here, from around here, way down to Sheckford was all burnt up.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That was the 1886 fire. Completely wiped out the whole town. Most of Eastport, like this, the customs, right there, most of Eastport was out over the water and they were like three stories, two-story buildings, most of Eastport, most of it was on the land part but most of it was out over the water. Remember that old painting? That guy would row up with his boat. They'd unload underneath the wharf. They'd heist things up into the store, two or three stories, most of Eastport was out over the water. Very little of it was on the land. Most people don't realize that. If it wasn't for the Canadians, we would have been dried up a long time ago. That's a good picture of –

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*Hollis Matthews:* That's the back of the theater what we were talking about. That's all –

*Wayne Wilcox:* We're not even up past here.

*Hollis Matthews:* One of the Nickel's buildings warehouse.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It's amazing what used to be here. This is all before the war, World War II.

*Hollis Matthews:* This is how we used to get over here before 1950. Was it –

*Wayne Wilcox:* Late '50's is when we built the causeway.

*Hollis Matthews:* Late '50's, yeah.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Part of the Passamaquoddy dam they did build.

*Hollis Matthews:* There's one more I want to show you.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Those are great photos, though.

*Hollis Matthews:* This is the one. I like that picture. That's Treat Island. That's the island right down off here. That's on the Lubec side of it. There were houses there.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, that's before. It's just all gone.

*Hollis Matthews:* Now, that's a good picture.

*Interviewer:* That's a great one, yeah.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Metropolitan picture. Megalopolis. *[Laughs]*

*Hollis Matthews:* You want a picture. This one here, this was one of my favorites.

*Interviewer:* Yeah, that's a good one.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That's something else.

*Hollis Matthews:* That's taken from Fort Hills.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Irish Hollow.

*Hollis Matthews:* Looking down –

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Holly can tell you all about these here.

*Hollis Matthews:* - Breakwater there. There's Booth Cannery, who used to be the independent with O'Grady's, wasn't it?

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, I believe it was.

*Hollis Matthews:* This is gone.

*Wayne Wilcox:* This is from 1960.

*Hollis Matthews:* This is still here. That one.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Milliken building. Post office is still here.

*Hollis Matthews:* But all this here is dead. This is Irish Hollow, this is where all the McCurdy's...

*Wayne Wilcox:* Sullivan Street runs down there. That was Eastport, basically. This is what it all looked like. All gone.

*Hollis Matthews:* This is before. This building is still here. That's the Quoddy Tides building. You know what that is now?

*Wayne Wilcox:* That's the old offices.

*Hollis Matthews:* Jimmy Daley's machine shops. That's gone. That's where your breakwater is. This, when I knew it, he sold dry goods to Ned Wayland. Apparently, with the size of the building, I think it was a rooming house for the sardine business. This one here, Kenny Eary lived in that house. That was our local blacksmith right there. Alec Boone. I do have some good pictures, and I enjoy looking at them.

*Wayne Wilcox:* You got any of the sardine camps? You know about the physical, like how they got the packers? A lot of them weren't local, a lot of them came from the other side, kind of seasonal, did anybody talk to you about that?

*Interviewer:* Hm-mm.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Back when the sardine business was really taking off, during roughly April to September, you used to have people come over from the other side. A lot of people that settled here are from Back Bay, New Brunswick. Lubec's the same way. During the packing

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season, they all would come over here with their families and have these little things called sardine camps. Little buildings – one floor and about two stories – none of them were very big. They're all over the island.

There were some down being built. They're everywhere. Where the big sardine plant was, someone had camped for the workers. They're migratory. They basically were walls and a roof and a place to heat. My oldest brother was born in a camp down at Clyde's factory down here at Shack's Cove in the third camp, second camp. That was 1936. That's where they put the workers up.

Basically they were there for the migrant workers that came over from the other side. A lot of them didn't go back over there, but some of them went down to Massachusetts, down to Avon Mass and Boston and Connecticut. When I was living in Massachusetts, there's a place called Little Eastport down there. I'm going, "What the hell's this all about?" Brockton used to be the shoe capital of the world, back before the war. Leather goods and stuff.

Well, I didn't know this, but I got talking to some people down there and they said, "Oh, Eastport, I know where Eastport is." I said, "What are you talking about?" They said, "Avon, we call it Little Eastport." You go, "What are you talking about?" "Well, back when the sardine plants closed, season ended, they all come down here and go to work." And when the season started up, I'm leaving, I'm going back to Eastport to work.

They quit in the spring, come home, back here to work, and work in the sardine plants. At the end of the season, they finish and went back down to Massachusetts, Connecticut, and places. That's why a lot of the families around here, a lot of them are from Massachusetts and Connecticut. That's why a lot of old families that go back and forth, because their grandparents came from Eastport, they worked in the sardine factories. They used to have migrant workers come over here all the time. Wherever they could squat or settle, they lived there. A lot of places would put them up in sardine camps.

*Hollis Matthews:* Well, I'll tell you one family that came over here was the Sutherlands. Grandpa.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, your grandparents, are all from Back Bay.

*Hollis Matthews:* All from down around Back Bay.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Lepreau. St. George. Black's Harbor. Yeah, all came over from the other side.

*Hollis Matthews:* See this right here? That is the slip from the shipyard.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Huston's Cove, Shackman's Cove.

*Hollis Matthews:* I love that picture. That's Jimmy Warren, like you're talking about.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, BH Wilson's fisheries. I wish I had some of the camps, though. That would be nice.

*Hollis Matthews:* I've got some.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Sardine camps.

*Hollis Matthews:* I got Beanville.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh, you got Beanville. Oh, that's great. The house next to me is small. His uncle and I used to live next door. It's two halves of sardine camps from Beanville. That's where, my uncle told me, he's ninety-three. [Xx] two halves, you got the first floor, the second, that was it. It was a little square, a little place, roof, chimney on it. They got the other half from down in Beanville, brought it up, and stuck it together. So it's about fourteen feet wide and about twenty-five feet long and it's two halves of a sardine camp.

*Hollis Matthews:* My uncle –

*Wayne Wilcox:* There's another one down the road that used to be a sardine camp. You look at the size and shape, it's an old sardine camp. Someone bought it and turned it into a house. Ain't no room to them at all, but there is some around. Yeah.

*Hollis Matthews:* I think my grandfather owned that house alongside. Jenna moved in there. My uncle. Seven kids. Six girls and a boy and a mother and father.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Just a downstairs and an upstairs is all it was. Small. Oh, my god.

*Hollis Matthews:* They used to play in the cellar.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, it's fourteen feet across. I measured it one time. Oh, my god, that's a sardine camp. My uncle said, "Oh, yeah, I didn't know that. Really?" I said, "Yeah, they put two halves together, made it a little bit longer so it's about fourteen feet wide." That's where Donna and Vicky are living right now. I said, "Oh, my god in these little places?" They still survive.

*Hollis Matthews:* You know? Eleanor had a piano in there.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yes.

*Hollis Matthews:* Jesus.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I don't know how.

*Hollis Matthews:* I don't know how she got it either.

*[Laughter]*

*Wayne Wilcox:* There just is no room at all in there.

*Hollis Matthews:* I think there was a front room, a living room, and a kitchen. Then, the stairs out of the kitchen went up there. Or did they go up from the –

*Wayne Wilcox:* They went up from the kitchen, because she had a beautiful stove, I remember that. Now, Lubec was the same way. They had sardine camps, a big factory, and you had to put the workers up somewhere. As far as the outhouse goes, it's just over the water or they had an outhouse. That was the toilet facilities. Every big place, like McNicols, they had sardine camps. They all had the standard size. That was it. It was just for the summer time, basically. But my folks lived down there year round because they had no place to go in 1929.

*Hollis Matthews:* That was [xx].

*Wayne Wilcox:* There were three camps. When I was there, when I was a kid, I grew up and I graduated in 1972 and we used to play in the wharf underneath the building. Three little buildings were still there. They're in good shape. They tore them down eventually, but they're still there. My brother was born in the middle camp. I didn't know that until years later.

*Hollis Matthews:* We really got a lot of history. Wayne and I, we talk about it.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* All the time.

*Hollis Matthews:* All the time, we lie a little bit. Not much! Not much. But I think between me – not I, me. Object and preposition?

*[Laughter]*

*Wayne Wilcox:* Better than I.

*Hollis Matthews:* Object to Preposition is subjunctive mood. Wow! I am smart!  
*[Laughs]* We come up here. He brings up some pictures.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I'll find something to show.

*Hollis Matthews:* He just had an article in the paper.

*Interviewer:* Oh, nice.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I published local historical stuff.

*Hollis Matthews:* I've been trying to get him to write a book.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Some day.

*Hollis Matthews:* Some day, when I'm old and feeble and can't read and I'm gone. But he does. He had a good one. I think it was very, very interesting. It was called the Battle of the Sand Beach. Wayne, you got to explain this. This is a really good story.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Well, you know a little bit of history of Eastport, captured by the British in the War of 1812. Well, actually, there was a battle that took place April 30<sup>th</sup> of 1814 – I call it the first battle of Moose Island. We won that one. Lost the second one. Schooner was coming up, resupplying the fort. The soldiers marched in from Boston, the 40<sup>th</sup> regiment, and the ship is supplied by schooners, because they couldn't bring them up. It was mud season.

*Hollis Matthews:* We have a fort up there.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Fort Sullivan. Where the high school is. So they shipped the rest of them up with a schooner from Boston. They had twelve guys from the regiment stationed on board. Lieutenant Manning was in charge of it. The British blockaded New England, from New England all the way down to Florida, basically. There was a big blockade. So the schooner comes up, and he avoids all the British warships, and all the privateers and sneaks in by West Quoddy

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Head, and squeaks up through the Lubec Narrows, where there's two British warships anchored in Friar Bay, which is Friar Roads, which is just beyond Treat Island.

They had patrols out – the British out rolling around. I got a log book from the British warships. Copies of that. They spied the schooner coming. It was early in the morning of April 30<sup>th</sup>. So the schooner starts high-tailing it for the fort, protection from the guns. The British are going after it, they're rowing, and the schooner's losing speed. The wind's dying down.

So the British warships are chasing the schooner, and the schooner ain't going to make it, so they beach it. There's a south inlet called Sand Beach. Beautiful sand beach down here. They beach it down there, and for two and a half hours, the British kept bombarding the beached schooner. With cannons and the British with the rowboats and stuff. They were shooting their swivel guns off. They're shooting their muskets off. They'd go in and the Americans would drive them out. So there's twelve Americans lined up next to the grounded schooner, driving the British off.

The British came in. The larger British warship would come up and anchor and started firing so the British captains fire their great guns at the Americans on the beach. They're going, "Oh, this is good." This went over two and a half hours. Lieutenant Manning got one of the men to go up to the fort and bring reinforcements down. They only had fifty guys up there, wasn't that many. They come down with twelve more men. So now they got twenty-seven against about fifty in the boats, and the British warship firing. The Americans drove them off.

They had one slightly wounded, and the British had two wounded. They drove the British off. They said, "It's not worth it." So they high-tailed it. The schooner came in, docked down by the bottom of Boyd Street on the town landing. There was a great celebration. The [xx] and Lieutenant Manning did a great job. Two months later, the British came in force and captured all of them. So it didn't last very long.

*Hollis Matthews:* But anyway, I'd never heard of that before, and I don't think anybody else.

*Wayne Wilcox:* No one really talks about it. A little blurb.

*Hollis Matthews:* I'll bet if we went down there with one of these –

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*Wayne Wilcox:* I know you'd find something.

*Hollis Matthews:* Find a cannonball.

*Wayne Wilcox:* It's all sandy on Sand beach.

*Hollis Matthews:* Because it's a big hill going down there. I'll bet there are a hundred cannonballs in that hill.

*Wayne Wilcox:* I wouldn't be surprised. Jeff Matthews used to tell me about this. During the sailing ship days, he'd bring the ships up, like the *Dorothy*, and they'd beach it in Sand Beach and get four or five mast schooners and beach them and do all the work on the hull. When they float them back out, they leave this huge depression in the sand. Kids used to go down there, jump off into the water, like they were swimming, they'd fall in.

*Hollis Matthews:* From the cave.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah! That's what they used to repair the boats and stuff. It's neat.

*Hollis Matthews:* I'll tell you, when we were kids, young like me, for instance, we didn't have much. We didn't need much. Ever seen anybody have a pickup baseball game now? We did. We used to have a pickup baseball game, go down to the beach there and go swimming. Take a peanut butter sandwich, sometimes, and Kool-Aid. Not soda, Kool-Aid. Go down there, spend the whole day there. Water will freeze your toes.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh, it's terribly cold in there.

*Hollis Matthews:* Oh, it's cold, but we enjoyed it down there. As they say, you want to go to the movies, you might be able to make it once a week on a Saturday afternoon. If you begged long enough.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, so Eastport and Lubec have a lot in common. In the sardine business, it was just a natural outgrowth of communities. Plus, they had the Lubec-Eastport ferry going, too. That helped a lot. We're more isolated now than we were back then. Just the way it is.

*Hollis Matthews:* We got a nice town. As far as I'm concerned, it's a very nice town. If only they'd get their act together up there, in the municipal area, we'd have a better town.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* It'd be nice to see it more successful.

*Hollis Matthews:* We sell off property that shouldn't be. We give property away. Or we just let people take it! We get a sidewalk here. Some guy came in from New Jersey and he covered it all over with stone. Sold into Battery Street, down where the famous Jimmy Warren –

*Wayne Wilcox:* Factories, yeah. That's private property now.

*Hollis Matthews:* He sold it. Private property now. This is ridiculous.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Loss of access to beaches. That's another problem we have here.

*Hollis Matthews:* We let them get away with it. That's the worst part of it. They talk about Mike Cummings being on the council. Well, Mike gets things done. These trucks coming by here at ninety miles an hour, they use what they call a jake-brake. You hear a roar and everything. Well, somebody complained to Mike. Mike went down there, and he complained to them. No more jake-brakes. Now, that didn't stop the speeding, though. About ninety miles an hour going by here.

*Wayne Wilcox:* So after this, you're going to Port Clyde, you said?

*Interviewer:* Well, yeah. Eastport and Lubec and then Rockland and Port Clyde.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That'll be interesting. You'll have amassed quite a bit of information, I would assume.

*Interviewer:* Yeah, definitely.

*Wayne Wilcox:* This should be a good project.

*Interviewer:* Yeah. It's been really great, and you guys have been super helpful.

*Hollis Matthews:* Well, thank you. I'm glad talking to you.

*Hollis Matthews:* I'll get you some pictures.

*Interviewer:* I can be in touch. I know I have Wayne's e-mail.

*Hollis Matthews:* No, I don't have e-mail. You have Lisa Gavin.

*Interviewer:* I'll give you guys a call.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Let me know how things are going and stuff. I'm sure Port Clyde is different than down here. Port Clyde reminds me a lot of Cutler, which is a nice little fishing village. This is more of an industrial backed – Bob Peacock could give you more of the details. It's interesting how you go down the coast and you get these different communities and stuff. Port Clyde history is more in tune with the sea, like we used to be, but they're still fishing. They're still doing something.

*Hollis Matthews:* Yachting.

*Wayne Wilcox:* We're not talking Hancock Point here, Holly.

*Hollis Matthews:* No, but we're talking about the Boothbay Harbor.

*Wayne Wilcox:* In summertime, that's beautiful down there.

*Hollis Matthews:* That's what I'm talking about.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Boothbay used to be quite the fishing place. Sardine stuff.

*Hollis Matthews:* I remember Albert, he spent a lot of time in the Coast Guard, first stationed in Port Clyde. He was what we called a 'surf man'.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh yeah, yeah.

*Hollis Matthews:* Remember? They had that over there, Lubec, Passamaquoddy.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Lifesaving station. Yeah.

*Hollis Matthews:* They had one of these slides that you bring your boat up and get it all ready. Then, something happens. These poor fishermen are out there hollering, "Save me!" They didn't know what the hell they could do without ruining the boat.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Rockland should be interesting, because there's still a big lobster place down there. They got more of a personal thing than we do around here. We used to be that way.

*Hollis Matthews:* Used to be a big commercial fishing company down there called O'Hara's. O'Hara had a place here, you know.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Oh, did they?

*Hollis Matthews:* Walter [xx] is there. Walter worked for O'Hara when O'Hara –

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*Wayne Wilcox:* I still see the name around.

*Hollis Matthews:* O'Hara went out, Walter got the place.

*Interviewer:* What did O'Hara's do up here?

*Hollis Matthews:* Fish. They'd bring fish in. Most of the fish that they brought in, they had their own boats. They'd go out and they'd get the yellow, and get the perch. The whitefish. It's a soft fish and they'd pack it for institutional food. Then, like I told you, they had the fish peddlers. They came down there and about once or twice a week they'd fill up. He'd get most of his groundfish. Came over from Campobello.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah there was big handlining in Campobello.

*Hollis Matthews:* They'd come over here and bring the fish over here. Harvey Newman was one of them. He's the only one I remember, and a guy by the name of Matthews. He and I, we didn't get along, probably because we might be relatives or something. They'd bring a lot of fish in, a lot of groundfish. Harry Ray, another market, they used to ship fish to Boston out of here. Kenny Maller used to keep them supplied.

*Wayne Wilcox:* That's true.

*Hollis Matthews:* Handlining or trawl. You know what a trawl is?

*Interviewer:* Yeah.

*Wayne Wilcox:* God, they used to do a lot of that here.

*Hollis Matthews:* They used to do a lot of that here.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Then, Reedy Wilson used to take his pollock out, used to dry them in the sun. You go by there, I was just a little kid, and he used to salt the hell out of everything. That just smelled good. They used to carry out in the summer sun. You think about flies, the DEP would hang you. But, he had them all dried out, little carts, they'd be all spread out, big, big pollock. He had the salt. Man, they smelled good.

*Hollis Matthews:* I remember part of his boat house, he had a few dozen of those hanging up. You'd go by. You'd go by along and take a cut and chew it. They're good. You eat them raw.

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*Wayne Wilcox:* Yeah, it was all cured by salt. Tough as nails, but I got to tell you. Really changed a lot around here, really has.

*Interviewer:* Okay, perfect. Well, thank you very much. You guys have been very helpful.

*Wayne Wilcox:* Hope we've been helpful for you.

*Hollis Matthews:* I want to show you a couple pictures.

*[End of Audio]*

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